Chapter 23. The liberal tradition in fiction

Peter Blair

[Final typescript (or 'post-print') version of article accepted for publication in *The Cambridge History of South African Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge and David Attwell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)]

To speak of any 'tradition', let alone a 'liberal' tradition, in South African English fiction requires caution. In 1979 Stephen Gray considered that 'tradition-making, in English South Africa, has often occurred fortuitously, rather than by any planned consciousness through which the writer has fused his or her own literature's past with contemporary stimuli' (*Southern African Literature*, p. 7), and in 1994 Stephen Clingman concluded that there is 'no aim or sense of building a novelistic tradition', only 'patterns of thematic accumulation' ('Novel', p. 1148). If the critical consensus has resisted the notion of a tradition, it has nevertheless ascribed a certain shape to the literary history of liberal fiction. Richard Rive, himself a liberal author, is one of many who consider Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948) a 'watershed', soon after which 'liberal writing was on the wane' ('The Liberal Tradition', pp. 31, 21). Paul Rich argues that between *Beloved Country* and Nadine Gordimer's *The Late Bourgeois World* (1966) a 'crisis at the heart of post-war South African liberalism' gave rise to 'a progressive loss of literary self-confidence' that 'produced an internal crisis of literary form' (*Hope and Despair*, pp. 119-20; see also Rich, 'Liberal Realism'), while Michael Vaughan describes the overturning of liberal hegemony in the 1970s by modernism and popular realism, represented respectively by J. M. Coetzee and Mtutuzeli Matshoba ('Literature and Politics'). Whereas these appraisals explain literary development primarily in terms of historical context, Tony Morphet's 'patricidal' account of

'trajectories in the liberal novel' foregrounds immanent factors, highlighting decisive cleavages between Paton (a backward-looking Christian and traditional liberal, whose allegiance is to the rural and to religion) and Gordimer (a forward-looking secular and radical liberal, whose allegiance is to the urban and to history); and between Gordimer and Coetzee (an 'epistemological liberal', who rejects linearity, whether nostalgic or utopian, for a spatialising scrutiny of colonial and novelistic discourses) (Morphet, 'Stranger Fictions').

Whilst Rive, Rich, and Vaughan in various ways resist crude historical determinism, and Morphet's notion of 'trajectory' fights shy of 'tradition', stressing key inter-author dissonances rather than comprehensive intertextual resonance, what emerges from both emphases is a three-part narrative suggesting a pre-apartheid elaboration of what might be termed 'classic' liberal fiction, followed by a period of transition, and a transformation in the 1970s in what David Attwell notes was 'a literary-intellectual moment that became generally understood as "postliberal"' (*J. M. Coetzee*, p. 26).[1] Although this teleology, and its periodisation of the fiction into discrete phases, could well be problematised, this chapter will use it as a serviceable framework, as well as outlining its socio-historical context and a fourth, post-apartheid, stage.

Liberalism in politics and civil society

If it is problematic to speak of a 'tradition', the term 'liberal' raises even more acute difficulties, since liberalism has meant different things at different times to different South Africans. In 1973 Paton offered a well-known seven-fold definition that was, however, expressly transhistorical: 'By liberalism I don't mean the creed of any party or any century. I mean a generosity of spirit, a tolerance of others, an attempt to comprehend otherness, a

commitment to the rule of law, a high ideal of the worth and dignity of man, a repugnance for authoritarianism and a love of freedom' (Alexander, *Alan Paton*, p. 383). In 1998 David Welsh listed seven (broadly cognate) 'core values of liberalism': 'a commitment to fundamental human rights and those procedural safeguards known as the rule of law', 'a commitment to constitutionalism', 'a belief in equality', 'an emphasis on the primacy of the individual', 'tolerance of conflicting viewpoints', 'an optimistic belief in the possibilities of individual and social "improvement"', and 'compassion' (Welsh, 'The Liberal Inheritance', p. 2). For the purposes of this chapter, the last four may be taken, along with Paton's writerly 'attempt to comprehend otherness', as the criteria that distinguish liberalism from other ideologies that also promote equality, constitutionalism, and the rule of law; but the chapter will stress the historical, as well as literary, incarnation of these principles, for while they are seductively humanistic they are also notoriously elusive and their implications uncertain. In particular, as Welsh acknowledged, democracy is conspicuously absent from his 'core values'. He considered that their 'cumulative consequence...would be a democratic system', yet, as he had conceded in 1987, 'the conjunction of the two words "democratic" and "liberal"...has not always been true of the whole of the South African liberal tradition' (Butler, Elphick, and Welsh, 'Editors' Introduction', p. 7).

This tradition developed from a liberal paternalism imported into the Cape Colony as part of the cultural baggage of British administrators (from 1795) and the 1820 Settlers. A significant minority challenged the local conditions of slavery (abolished 1834, with manumission in 1838), and humanitarian polemics against the mistreatment of indigenous peoples appeared in the 1820s and 1830s, including Thomas Pringle's *Narrative of a Residence in South Africa* (1834) (see chapter 9). Liberals also established a democratic marker in the colour-blind franchise entrenched in the Colony's 1853 constitution, though its

whittling down by registration Acts in 1887, 1892, and 1894 left Cape liberalism somewhat tarnished (Davenport, 'The Cape Liberal Tradition', pp. 32-3).

After the Union of South Africa in 1910, and under a United Party intent on tightening and codifying segregation, liberals were active in welfare work and social research, through the Joint Councils in the 1920s and, from 1929, the Institute of Race Relations. They made important contributions to the debate about segregation, their analyses ranging from (usually separatist) group-based multi-racialism, theorised as cultural idealism, to (ultimately assimilationist) individual-based non-racialism, which stressed common humanity. But as Hertzog's administration (1924-39) appropriated liberals' terminology to justify a brand of segregation that was repressive rather than benevolent, many distanced themselves from the policy and concentrated on ameliorating its effects. (See Dubow, *Racial Segregation*; Rich, *White Power*; Rich, *Hope and Despair*.)

The Smuts government of 1939-48 relaxed segregation, but the election of Malan's Nationalists under the banner of apartheid, and their re-election in 1953, prompted liberals, led by Paton, to form the Liberal Party. Hoping to secure the support of white voters, the Party initially adopted the Cape principle of 'civilised' suffrage, but in 1954 it ratified a policy of universal suffrage to be progressively introduced, and in 1960 accepted that it should be introduced without delay. The Party also radicalised in other ways, supporting boycotts (1959) and advocating land redistribution (1961). Black membership had increased, and 1960-1 saw the Party 'at the height of its achievement' (Robertson, *Liberalism in South Africa*, p. 215; see also Vigne, *Liberals Against Apartheid*). Meanwhile, the Black Sash (founded 1955) enhanced liberalism's profile as campaigner and mediator.

In the wake of the Sharpeville massacre (1960) and the establishment of the Republic (1961), however, liberalism looked impotent. The Liberal Party went into decline, precipitated by the exposure in 1964 of young, rogue members who had abandoned non-

violence for the sabotage activities of the African Resistance Movement (1961-4). In 1968, when non-racial political organisations were outlawed, the Party dissolved itself. Party-political liberalism became the prerogative of the Progressive Party (founded 1959), the relative conservatism of which allowed it to achieve the parliamentary representation that eluded the Liberal Party; while Helen Suzman was its sole MP in the 1960s, as the Progressive Federal Party it became the official opposition (1977-86).

By this stage, however, liberalism was regarded by most blacks and leftist whites as a quietist ideology complicit with colonialism, rather than a disinterested mediator or credible oppositional strategy. Dialogist approaches had manifestly failed, and liberal faith in the 'self-correctibility' of the individual, and of society, looked misplaced (Vaughan, p. 120). Critics derided the idealism of appealing to errant consciences to correct themselves, and debunked the belief of economic liberals that capitalism would erode apartheid. Black Consciousness, emerging in the late 1960s, anyway rejected non-racialism, and the 1976 Soweto uprising made liberals' gradualism seem irrelevant. In the 1950s figures such as Paton and Suzman had been denounced as liberals by the Right, but 'in the 1980s the Left freely used "liberal", as well as "humanist", as terms of abuse' (Coetzee, 'South African Liberals', p. 322).

The fortunes of South African PEN, the 'most straightforwardly liberal' writers' group in the country (McDonald, *The Literature Police*, p. 166), followed a similar trajectory. The South African branch of PEN was launched in Johannesburg in 1927 by Sarah Gertrude Millin, whose fiction obsessively denigrates 'miscegenation', but as the group became increasingly anti-racialist Millin felt marginalised and in 1960 resigned. By this stage, PEN had a second branch in Cape Town, and around eighty members (p. 166). PEN's 1955 yearbook had sufficiently upset the government for it to withdraw a grant supporting the publication (Sowden, 'The PEN'), and in 1964-8 a series of editorials by Tony Fleischer

protested against censorship and depicted the membership as ‘embattled’, under pressure from both Left and Right to toe an ‘official line’; but Fleischer also dismissed ‘ideological distinctions’ as ‘tiresome’, prizing such qualities as sincerity and individuality (Fleischer, Editorial). PEN was thus variously regarded as ‘white liberal advocacy group’ and ‘belletristic bourgeois club’ (McDonald, p. 168). In the mid-1970s PEN was challenged by the newly formed Artists’ and Writers’ Guild, a radical group frustrated with the ‘relatively passive tradition of liberal protest’ embodied by PEN (p. 177), and in 1978 the Johannesburg branch merged with the AWG and other groups to be reconstituted, under black leadership, as Johannesburg PEN. However, tensions between those who believed that a non-racial guild was ‘inimical to the black consciousness movement’ and ‘inhibit[ed] the writing of literature “relevant” to the struggle’ (Wentzel, *The Liberal Slideaway*, p. 13), and non-racialists such as Lionel Abrahams, who was concerned that concentrating on the ‘populist utterance’ neglected ‘techniques and individual self-realisation’ (Abrahams, ‘From Shakespeare House’, pp. 10, 16), led to disbandment in January 1981, many members forming the exclusively black African Writers’ Association.

It would be wrong, though, to assume that liberal writing had been, or would become, the preserve of white English-speakers. The first novel by a black South African, Sol Plaatje’s *Mhudi* (1930, written c.1917-20), was in some key respects liberal, depicting the destructive effect on interpersonal relations of tribal and racial chauvinisms in the 1830s, during the *mfecane* and ‘Great Trek’; and this chapter will discuss writers who were coloured (Peter Abrahams, Richard Rive) and Afrikaans (André Brink), as well as two post-apartheid black writers. Nevertheless, liberalism’s entanglement with the stubborn self-image of English-speakers as frontier innocents caught ‘in the middle’ between the competing nationalisms of laager and kraal – which Mike Kirkwood, in a swingeing 1974 attack,

branded ‘Butlerism’, after poet Guy Butler (Kirkwood, ‘The Colonizer’) – helped ensure the predominant Englishness of the tradition, and its demise.

In 1979 the editor of *The Liberal Dilemma in South Africa* pronounced the book an ‘epitaph’ for liberalism (Van den Berghe, Introduction, p. 8), and in 1984 Rich concurred that liberalism had ‘failed politically’ (*White Power*, p. 123). In 1993, however, Rich conceded that liberalism had ‘acquired an unforeseen relevance’ (*Hope and Despair*, p. 211). Proponents hailed the ‘ironic victory’ that saw liberal values ‘rise phoenix-like’ to be enshrined in the post-apartheid constitution and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Johnson and Welsh, *Ironic Victory*; Vigne, p. 224). Rich subsequently argued the revisionist case that ‘since at least the late 1970s’ liberalism was being reinvented, all but losing its ‘distinct political identity’ in the ‘merging of liberal, democratic and non-racial discourses’ during the 1980s and early 1990s (‘New’, pp. 1, 14, 16). The terms ‘liberal’ and ‘liberalism’, however, remain widely pejorative.

Classic liberal fiction, 1883–1948

If British settlers established liberalism at the Cape, Olive Schreiner is generally credited with founding the ‘liberal-concerned’ tradition in the South African novel (Parker, ‘The South African Novel’, p. 7), her preface to the second edition of *The Story of an African Farm* (1883) renouncing the imperial romance (see chapter 11), as the mode of the outsider, and inaugurating an indigenous tradition of liberal realism. This foundation in contradistinction to another fictional mode was salutary, for the later development of liberal fiction can be charted against writing that was variously illiberal, anti-liberal, or simply uninterested in liberalism, ranging from the racist schematics of Millin to the social(ist) realism of Alex la

Guma, and from Black Consciousness writing (see chapter 24) to fiction in the 'experimental line' (see chapter 38). More important, though, is the realist mode that Schreiner's inaugural text adopts and adapts, being clearly marked by the affinity between the novel as it developed in nineteenth-century Britain and a liberal outlook, with its emphasis on interiority and choice, grounded in a paradoxical conception of the individual as embedded in socio-historical context yet essentially free of social determinants.

African Farm is generically complex, but this liberal aesthetic drives its exploration of the bleak struggles for self-realisation of its two Cape-born protagonists, Lyndall (a proto-feminist) and Waldo (an eventual pantheist), against the boorish colonials and harsh landscape of the Karoo. For all its much-vaunted liberalism, however, the novel is only marginally concerned with race. Black characters are also peripheral in the posthumously published *Undine* (1928) and *From Man to Man* (1926), and their representations tainted with the scientific racism that fascinated Schreiner in her 1890s essay 'The Problem of Slavery' (*Thoughts on South Africa*, 1923). Schreiner's most straightforwardly liberal works are *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* (1897), an allegory attacking Rhodes and the treatment of Rhodesia's indigenous people by his Chartered Company, and the pamphlet *Closer Union* (1909), which argued for the extension of the Cape franchise to the new federation. The anti-imperial humanitarianism of *Peter Halket* is evident in Schreiner's eulogising of the Boers in *Thoughts* and the short story 'Eighteen Ninety-Nine' (1923, written c.1901-4), but the contradiction in her advocacy of both African and Afrikaner remained unresolved; as in her three novels and *Woman and Labour* (non-fiction, 1911), she is often more interested in the position of women and construction of gender (see chapter 37). Schreiner's inauguration of the 'liberal-concerned' tradition is therefore complex, compromised by a conservative ethnography and complicated or even displaced by other, broadly liberal, concerns.

Like *African Farm*, Pauline Smith's *The Beadle* (1926) largely occludes the black labour on which the white farm depends, but where Schreiner found colonial society cruelly trammelling, Smith is nostalgic for its feudal paternalism – despite the poor-white tragedies of *The Little Karoo* (1925) (see chapter 18). Most liberal fiction after Schreiner, however, stemmed from a domestication of the European 'social-problem' novel, race being substituted for class, and two key aspects of the local 'Colour Problem' were compulsively fictionalised: black migration to the cities giving rise to the 'Jim Comes to Jo'burg' theme, and interracial sex producing the 'miscegenation' novel.

The first anti-miscegenation law had been passed in 1685, but subsequent laws (including legislation of 1902 and the Immorality Act of 1927) provoked liberal protest. Among the earliest examples are Perceval Gibbon's *Souls in Bondage* (1904) and *Margaret Harding* (1911), but in neither does miscegenation occur. *Souls in Bondage* merely raises the possibility of marriage between a white man and a coloured woman (then legal) as an act of paternalistic charity, while *Margaret Harding*'s more daring exploration of unconsummated desire in the illicit, doubly-taboo conjunction of black man and white woman amounts, finally, to a cautious plea for legal and attitudinal reform. The prurient Millin, in contrast, is unequivocally condemnatory, though 'the mild liberalism of her early years' (Rubin, *Sarah Gertrude Millin*, p. 74) produces aberrant, empathetic moments in *God's Step-Children* (1924) (Blair, 'That "Ugly Word"'). Self-contradiction is thematised in William Plomer's *Turbott Wolfe* (1925), which has been described as 'a forerunner of the "liberal novel" and at the same time a critique of liberalism' (Rabkin, 'Race and Fiction', p. 86); Wolfe becomes enthusiastically involved in a pro-miscegenation society, only to find himself unable to approve of, or engage in, an interracial affair. Plomer gives the theme more-considered treatment in 'The Child of Queen Victoria' (1933). Peter Abrahams's *The Path of Thunder* (1948), in which love takes Lanny Swartz and his white partner 'above and beyond colour'

(p. 91), until others intervene, offers perhaps the strongest liberal protest. But the novel also interrogates contradictions in liberal ideology, Swartz's self-immolation in the doomed affair arguably symptomatic of a 'crisis of the liberal subject', produced when the incorporationist project that underpins his identity as a teacher – a candidate for, and acculturating agent of, eventual assimilation – is rendered obsolete by an illiberal system (Wade, 'Peter Abrahams's *The Path of Thunder*').

Tensions within liberalism also emerge in the 'Jim Comes to Jo'burg' subgenre, which was 'essentially concerned with the rural black man's encounter with the white-controlled industrial city' (Gray, 'Third World', p. 61). The 'Jim' typically journeys from naivety to depravity, via bewilderment, wonder, dissolute peers, white injustice, and brutal employment (often including traumatic entombment in the mines), while the fiction looks to liberal patronage and/or retribalisation as possible remedies. This subgenre was pioneered by Douglas Blackburn's *Leaven: A Black and White Story* (1908), in which Bulalie suffers the inevitable corruption, despite the endeavours of missionary David Hyslop (the liberal 'leaven'). Bulalie, who redeems himself in his final moments, is both a parody of Umslopogaas from Haggard's *Allan Quatermain* (1887) (Coetzee, Couzens, and Gray, 'South African Literatures', p. 193) and 'the first credible black figure in our fiction' (Chapman, *Southern African Literatures*, p. 141), and Blackburn's probing of the system that destroys him ironises Hyslop's resilient faith in paternalism. *Leaven* thus anticipates key concerns of the liberal-realist tradition – the (often self-conscious) representation of otherness; individual- versus system-based social analyses; the limits of trusteeship – as well as reflecting Blackburn's foundation of an alternative, if intermittent, tradition of satire, in which his most significant successor was Herman Charles Bosman (see chapter 18).

A number of subsequent 'Jim' narratives explore the prospects for retribalising the migrant. In W. C. Scully's *Daniel Vananda: The Life Story of a Human Being* (1923),

Vananda's urban dissolution is redeemed by the intervention of Stephen Vardy; but Vardy's death leaves Vananda exposed, driven to the Reef where he contracts phthisis, a ravaging lung-disease that symbolises the city's contamination of the black migrant. Scully's protest is passionate, and he clearly demonstrates the inadequacy of ad hoc liberal interventions; but he explores no alternative urban solution, and when Vananda retreats to his birthplace to die he finds the once 'delectable land, rich of soil and murmurous with many streams' (p. 17) blighted by drought and taxes. In two shorter, contrasting works of 1927, R. R. R. Dhlomo's novella *An African Tragedy* (a mission morality-tale) and Plomer's 'Ula Masondo' (a quizzical short story), no liberal patron intervenes, and the return of the deracinated migrant has catastrophic consequences for others. Dhlomo's Robert Zulu returns a drunken philanderer who infects his wife and, fatally, his child with venereal disease, while the estrangement of Masondo, who returns with a pregnant prostitute on his arm, is such that he disowns his mother, driving her to suicide. These anxieties are absent, however, from Frank Brownlee's *Ntsukumbini: Cattle Thief* (1929), in which Ntsukumbini, having returned from the city unscathed, indulges in nostalgic reminiscences about his youthful tribal exploits, with Brownlee (in a conceit both deferential and appropriative) his amanuensis.

Later works reluctantly accept detribalisation, and in the absence of a viable segregationist solution reflect self-consciously on black proletarianisation and its challenge to liberal ideology. In Laurens van der Post's *In a Province* (1934) the migrant-story of Kenon Badiakgotla is subsumed in a loaded portrayal of trade-union activity in the 1920s, represented by Burgess, a rabble-rousing Marxist who rejects liberalism's 'inevitability-of-gradualness nonsense' (p. 187) for revolution. Afrikaner Johan van Bredepoel voices the classic liberal riposte: 'The system is only a garment round the human heart; it doesn't give the shape to the heart, it takes its own shape from the heart' (p. 334). Abrahams's *Mine Boy* (1946), in contrast, engages in a heuristic spirit with Marxist, Africanist, and liberal analyses,

but is ultimately unresolved, Xuma's vision of 'man without colour' (pp. 173-4) melding the three ideologies uneasily into a 'radical populist liberalism' (Wade, '*Song of the City*', p. 99).

The high-water mark of the subgenre is of course Paton's *Beloved Country*, a 'hypercanonical' text (Van der Vlies, *South African Textual Cultures*, pp. 71-105) often taken as metonymic of South African liberalism and liberal fiction, as well as a potential '"great national novel"' (Attwell, 'South African Literature', p. 516) and a malleable icon of South Africa in the global imaginary (see chapter 34). In 1946 Stephen Kumalo, a humble parson from rural Natal, journeys to Johannesburg in search of three relatives: his sister Gertrude, a prostitute; his brother John, a reckless demagogue; and his son Absalom, who has murdered liberal activist Arthur Jarvis during a bungled burglary. Paton's novel documents the harsh city conditions, as well as the rural degradation that ensures urbanisation; but it rejects black mass politics, caricatured in John Kumalo, endorsing the dignified long-suffering of his brother and valorising trusteeship, represented by a plethora of white liberals. Meanwhile, Kumalo's moving odyssey and reconciliation with Arthur's father seems designed to induce a change of heart in the complacent or illiberal reader, on the model of Jarvis's heart-changing, which moves him to charity. The novel's 'one great fear', voiced by a black clergyman, 'that one day when they turn to loving they will find we are turned to hating' (p. 235) ominously undercuts this approach, and the ironic coincidence of *Beloved Country*'s publication with the Nationalists' election made it seem outdated;[2] far from turning to loving, whites had elected a party seemingly bent on turning blacks to hating. As apartheid deepened, *Beloved Country* would look increasingly inadequate, exemplary of 'the failure of the liberal vision' (Watson, '*Cry, the Beloved Country*'), and it continued to be dismissed as 'an appeal to the lump in the throat' (Peck, *A Morbid Fascination*, p. 95). Properly historicised, however, *Beloved Country*'s social analysis looks more credible and its political gradualism less wishful than its detractors have alleged (Foley, '"Considered as a Social Record"'); and from a post-apartheid

perspective its theme of interracial reconciliation appears more relevant. But its paternalism and sentimentality may long forestall coronation as 'great national novel'.

Liberal fiction during apartheid, 1948–1970

Phyllis Altman's *The Law of the Vultures* (1952) offered an alternative, socialist analysis of the 'Jim' scenario, depicting liberals as ultimately unreliable and presenting black collectivist action sympathetically, but in most fiction the greenhorn 'Jim' was superseded by the urbanised black, whose experience was vividly represented by the *Drum* writers (see chapter 19). Liberal fiction also moved away from its pastoral affiliations, though the earlier line persisted in Paton and in Jack Cope, whose novels include *The Fair House* (1955), *The Golden Oriole* (1958), *Albino* (1964), and *The Rain-Maker* (1971). At the same time, the erosion of the peaceful non-racial activism of the 1950s, as the entrenchment of apartheid radicalised opposition, pushed liberal fiction towards critical self-scrutiny.

The development of Gordimer, whose novels offer a remarkably prompt, even prescient articulation of 'history from the inside' (Clingman, *The Novels of Nadine Gordimer*), is in many respects paradigmatic. *The Lying Days* (1953), a *Bildungsroman* straddling the 1948 election, traces Helen Shaw's awakening to, and rejection of, her racist society; but her disillusioning with the bohemian lifestyle-liberalism of friends and the embattled liberal-trusteeship of her lover leaves her unaligned, craving the escape represented by Europe. Dan Jacobson's novella *A Dance in the Sun* (1956) also depicts young English-speaking South Africans struggling to translate liberal inclination into practical action. Two student hitchhikers are appalled by the feudal family drama that unfolds at a ramshackle Karoo guesthouse, where the Afrikaner brother-in-law of the English-speaking proprietor has

fathered a child with the sister of a black servant; but they are left smarting and bemused by the servant's indifference to their offer of help. These early works by two writers of a new generation relocated the liberal dilemma to a young urban consciousness, in styles whose often-ironic detachment was quite different from the passionate lyricism of Paton.

In Gordimer's *A World of Strangers* (1958) such detachment is incomplete, for, as critics writing in the wake of South Africa's postliberal 'moment' observed, this novel was one of several in which Gordimer both exemplified and critiqued the 'pitfalls of' or 'strains in' liberalism (Parker, 'Nadine Gordimer'; Green, 'Nadine Gordimer's *A World*'). English narrator Toby Hood moves between Johannesburg's white suburbs and the black township of Sophiatown, associating in each with politically uncommitted 'private livers' and committed 'public livers' (pp. 122-3), until the death of his hedonist black friend Steven Sitole pushes him towards the latter. The novel depicts an exhilarating Sophiatown and asserts the Forsterian humanist paradigm that one need 'only connect'; but it also ironises Hood's immersion in shebeen jazz-culture, which is never far from voyeuristic urban safari, as well as his subsequent declaration of political solidarity. Athol Fugard, whose major contribution to the liberal tradition is in drama (see chapter 27), sets his only novel, *Tsotsi* (1980, written 1960-2), beneath the faux-underworld that is Hood's Sophiatown. 'Tsotsi', a murderous gang-leader who goes by the generic term for a black street thug, has repressed feelings of sympathy, along with the memory of his childhood and name, since a police raid removed his mother for a pass violation. A series of emotive encounters – with an innocent victim, a probing gang-member, a newborn taken from a woman he intended raping, a coerced wet-nurse, a legless beggar he intended killing, and a church gardener – restores his memory and compassion, which prompts the redemptive act in which he dies, attempting to save the baby from government bulldozers razing Sophiatown. *Tsotsi*, 'the first South African novel with a black protagonist to fully engage with the tradition of the *Bildungsroman*' (Barnard,

'Tsotsis', p. 551), thus implicates the white brutality that frames and circumscribes David Madondo's *Bildung*, and exemplifies in the most damaged of blacks a capacity for self-reformation that might also be embraced by the damaging whites. This 'proto-*Bildungsroman*' (p. 555) straddles divergences in liberal fiction, for while its Freudian underpinnings suggest some affinity with Gordimer, whose 'political' novels can be read as 'at core,…Freudian family romances' (Chapman, p. 235), its Christian overtones and moral example align Fugard with Paton.

Redemption of tsotsis by Christian-liberal methods is indeed the keynote of Paton's *Debbie Go Home: Stories* (1961), which draws on Paton's experience as Principal of Diepkloof black reformatory (1935-48), recounted in the first of his two volumes of autobiography, *Towards the Mountain* (1980) and *Journey Continued* (1988); these are important contributions to liberal prose, as are his biographies of prominent liberals, *Hofmeyr* (1964) and *Apartheid and the Archbishop* (1973). Other notable short-story writers in the liberal tradition include Jacobson (*A Long Way from London*, 1958, *Beggar My Neighbour*, 1964, *Inklings: Selected Stories*, 1973); Cope (*The Tame Ox*, 1960, *The Man Who Doubted*, 1967, *Alley Cat*, 1973, *Selected Stories*, 1986); Rive (*African Songs*, 1963, *Advance, Retreat: Selected Short Stories*, 1983); and Gordimer, whose ten collections are represented in *Selected Stories* (1975) and *Life Times: Stories, 1952-2007* (2010).

Miscegenation, the crux of Jacobson's *Dance*, had also attracted direct treatment. Paton's *Too Late the Phalarope* (1953), which appeared soon after the 1950 extension of the Immorality Act, focuses on the downfall of idolised police lieutenant Pieter van Vlaanderen. The story, set in a Transvaal dorp, is narrated by Pieter's chorus-like aunt as a tragedy, his miscegenetic 'error' prompted by a character flaw that makes him deviate from his strict Afrikaner-Calvinist upbringing; but unbending adherence to Afrikaner-Calvinism produces a further tragedy in his father striking Pieter's name from the family Bible, race-ideology

disabling compassion for his son. Jacobson's *The Evidence of Love* (1960) details the contrasting upbringings of white liberal Isabel Last and coloured student Kenneth Makeer, and the ways in which these (and a hypocritical benefactress) complicate their falling in love in London, as well as their defiant gesture of returning home married, where they are imprisoned for 'Immorality'. Gordimer's *Occasion for Loving* (1963) does not directly invoke the Act, but extends Jacobson's attention to the psychological effects of apartheid, which cause the affair between Gideon Shibalo and Ann Davis to fail, even though it takes place within the most liberal of social circles.

Besides this generational, rural-urban split in literary liberalism, a startlingly different liberal voice emerged from 'popular' writing. Between 1946 and 1974 Daphne Rooke published eight South African novels that together cover the country's major events from 1868 to 1961, often retaining the sense – renounced by Schreiner, and absent from the puritanical liberal mainstream – of history as pioneering adventure. Rooke uses a 'popular' romance mode, which has been dubbed 'colonial Gothic' (Voss, 'The Story'), to 'serious historical effect' (Green, 'Difference and Domesticity', p. 130), largely because of her broad imaginative sympathy. Particularly noteworthy are *Mittee* (1951), set in the rural Transvaal of 1890-c.1902 and narrated by a coloured female servant; *Ratoons* (1953), which includes sustained focus on Natal's Indian community in the early 1900s; *Wizards' Country* (1957), set in 1870s Zululand and narrated by a tribal Zulu; and *The Greyling* (1962), set in 1960-1, mostly in a Transvaal dorp, and narrated by an Afrikaner woman. *Mittee* and *The Greyling* share Paton's interest in rural Afrikanerdom, and present miscegenation as the displaced colonialism that is perhaps latent in the white-man/black-woman scenario of *Phalarope*, rather than as the thwarted humanism explored in the black-man/white-woman relationships of *Evidence* and *Occasion*. They also focus on the experience of the subject woman, in contrast to *Phalarope*, where Stephanie remains a cipher. *Mittee* depicts a sadomasochistic

affair between Mittee's husband and her coloured servant Selena, as well as exploring the ambivalences of cross-racial sisterhood, while *The Greyling* explores an equally sadomasochistic relationship between Maarten Delport and the coloured Bokkie Sipho (the titular 'greyling'), but with a twist: Maarten comes to love Bokkie, murders her out of self-disgust, and is executed because the apartheid state is even less able than he to acknowledge his mitigating emotion. In reaction, his parents and the narrator undergo their own changes of heart. In *Phalarope*, Afrikaner hearts were not for changing. *Mittee* epitomised Rooke's predominant narrative mode, but the sombre *Greyling*, though it retains 'popular' elements, was a departure from it. While Rooke's darkly exuberant romances might broaden the liberal canon, *The Greyling* – Rooke's only contemporary and 'political', as opposed to 'historical', novel – thus sits, if a little awkwardly, within its agonistic mainstream.[3]

The Sharpeville shootings and inauguration of the Republic set the mood of *The Greyling*, but in their aftermath, as the 'armed struggle' was launched, the issue of political commitment became more prominent and problematic. Rive's *Emergency* (1964), set during three days in March 1960, between Sharpeville and the declaration of a State of Emergency, examines a crisis or 'emergency' in the political development of Andrew Dreyer, a coloured teacher who becomes involved in Cape Town's anti-pass-laws campaign; the focus on the ethical dilemma of the individual, and his hesitancy about commitment, set Rive apart from other black protest writers. The subsequent rise and crushing of the first wave of sabotage activity, particularly that of the African Resistance Movement, shapes Gordimer's novella *The Late Bourgeois World* (1966). Like Rive, Gordimer uses a compressed timescale to concentrate on a moment of decision, in this case a single day which begins with Elizabeth van den Sandt receiving news that her ex-husband Max, a young saboteur turned State-witness, has committed suicide. Though Max betrayed his liberal principles, and then his ex-liberal co-conspirators, Elizabeth concedes that he at least *did* something. Consequently, she

considers Luke Fokase's suggestion that she help channel overseas funding to his militant black resistance organisation; but the dilemma is unresolved, Elizabeth's liberal principles leaving her stalled at a bleak impasse. The scorn Elizabeth's sardonic narrative directs at 'bathed and perfumed and depilated white ladies' (p. 38), herself included, is a recurrent feature of Gordimer's fiction, and of Jillian Becker's trilogy *The Keep* (1967), *The Union* (1971), and *The Virgins* (1976); *The Virgins*, for example, exposes the colossal vanity and liberal sanctimony of an affluent Johannesburg matriarch, against which her adolescent daughter rebels.

Two novels of 1969 revisit the sixties' crisis-period and examine more decisive breaks with liberalism. C. J. Driver's *Elegy for a Revolutionary*, which explores the ARM and its betrayal from within, might almost be read as *The Late Bourgeois World*'s backstory; while Mary Benson's *At the Still Point*, in which liberal journalist Anne Dawson, radicalised by the political trials of 1965, decides to help an escaped prisoner cross the border for guerrilla training, culminates in the kind of decision on the verge of which Gordimer left Elizabeth. In Gordimer's *A Guest of Honour* (1970), set in an unnamed African post-colony, liberal ex-colonial administrator James Bray is persuaded to defect from the anti-colonial revolutionaries he helped bring to power and back a left-wing coup; though this is a complex novel addressed only obliquely to South Africa, Bray's double radicalisation, his acceptance of non-dialogist strategies and collectivist policies, does indicate a move beyond liberalism.

Postliberal fiction during apartheid, 1970–1990

By the early 1970s Gordimer was referring to herself as a 'radical', repudiating 'liberal' as a 'dirty word' (Ratcliffe, 'A South African Radical'), and her novels of the period she

christened the 'interregnum' (Gordimer, 'Living in the Interregnum'), from the mid-1970s to 1990, depict various liberalisms as redundant, often subjecting them to hostile irony. *The Conservationist* (1974) exposes the complicity of Johannesburg industrialist and weekend 'farmer' Mehring, a 'mining-house' liberal who dismisses the left-liberalism of his ex-mistress and teenage son as naive self-righteousness, and is in denial of what the novel's powerful symbolic and intertextual devices intimate is inevitable: black repossession of the land. In *Burger's Daughter* (1979) Gordimer provides one last, sympathetic account of the soul-searching of a young liberal idealist, but relocates it from a context of bourgeois complacence to one of radical dissidence. Rosa Burger, growing up the daughter of a celebrated communist between Sharpeville and Soweto, finds in the aftermath of Soweto that the commitment-crisis has been transformed by Black Consciousness into a rejection-crisis; though Rosa finally feels impelled to return from a European sojourn to contribute to 'the struggle', she can do so only in a peripheral role. Thereafter, liberalism is given short shrift. In *July's People* (1981), set in an imagined revolution in an imminent future, the scruples that guided Maureen Smales in her treatment of her servant July are shown, in retrospect, to be demeaning and self-serving. In *A Sport of Nature* (1987), which ranges from the mid-forties to the projected inauguration of a post-apartheid state, a reprisal of the early sixties also finds self-satisfaction in the more proactive liberalism of Hillela's guardian-aunt Pauline, from whom Hillela soon departs to join the ANC in exile. These acerbic valedictions are quite a contrast to Paton's retrospective celebration of fifties liberals in *Ah, But Your Land is Beautiful* (1981). The life of radical action chosen by Hillela is further valorised by Gordimer, in the forms of underground resistance and the pragmatic politics of transition, in *My Son's Story* (1990) and *None to Accompany Me* (1994).

This rejection of liberalism had its aesthetic corollary in a move away from liberal realism, anticipated by Plomer's proto-modernist *Turbott Wolfe* and apparent in Sheila

Fugard's *The Castaways* (1972). In Gordimer, history is usually refracted by an individual subjectivity itself shaped by family psychodynamics, but in this phase both history and its subjective refraction are problematised by unreliable, multiple, and limited perspectives, the most extreme of which produces the lacunae-ridden 'biography' of *A Sport of Nature*. At the same time, Gordimer re-wrote the liberal tradition's three most significant forms: *The Conservationist* followed Jacobson's *Dance* in subverting the farm novel of Schreiner and Smith; *July's People*, in which the Smales family flees Johannesburg for their servant's village, inverted the 'Jim Comes to Jo'burg' narrative; and *Burger's Daughter* updated the commitment-quandary *Bildungsroman*. However, the greatest challenge to the liberal novel, as well as to the broader politicisation of fiction, came from Coetzee, whose allegorical and metafictional works deconstructed colonial discourses and turned even more self-consciously to literary tradition. While *Dusklands* (1974) rewrote the eighteenth-century anthropological travelogue to expose the link between discursive and physical violence, and *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) reworked the farm novel and Afrikaans *plaasroman* as disorienting anti-pastoral, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983), *Foe* (1986), and *Age of Iron* (1990) reprised the liberal novel of philanthropic concern, re-examining the relevance of liberal values in thoroughly illiberal times. What was remarkable, too, was the confessional mode of Coetzee's first-person narrators, which took liberal self-criticism to a new, excoriating level.

A recurring situation in these novels is an encounter between a philanthropic liberal, who is clearly implicated in the structures of power, and an often wilfully inarticulate other whose victimhood is symbolised by a physical disfigurement. In *Barbarians* the liberal Magistrate of an imperial outpost in an unspecified place and time is disturbed by the torture of indigenous prisoners and their construction as the 'barbarians' on which empire is predicated. The Magistrate shelters a torture-scarred 'barbarian' girl, but his compulsive

sexual exploitation of her figures liberalism's complicity with empire and fetishisation of victimhood, while his subsequent public stand demonstrates liberalism's impotence before, and vulnerability to, imperial violence. In *Michael K*, set like *July's People* in a future revolutionary South Africa, the hare-lipped K rejects the Medical Officer's attempts to help and understand him, while in *Foe*, a metafictional prequel to *Robinson Crusoe*, a tongueless (and possibly castrated) Friday likewise resists the impositions of a self-appointed patron, Susan Barton. In *Age of Iron*, the scenario is replayed in Mrs Curren's relationship with the vagrant Vercueil, whose crippled hand betokens his withheld story; but Mrs Curren also bears a mark of apartheid – cancer of the (liberal) heart – and it is she who is pressed to answer questions now asked by the other. *Age of Iron* locates this examination in the Cape Town unrest of 1986, and has Mrs Curren's charitable actions and humanitarian pronouncements rebutted not just by the taciturn Vercueil but by forthright characters from Guguletu township, meanwhile subjecting her thoughts to self-scrutiny. The novel has thus been regarded as liberalism's 'death rattle', or its elegy (see Marais, 'J. M. Coetzee', p. 146); but it can also be argued that Mrs Curren's very lack of authority, her stark marginality and political irrelevance, paradoxically validates her opinions (Attwell, *J. M. Coetzee*, p. 122).

If *Age of Iron* does salvage ethical values from the wreckage of liberalism, one which remains irrecoverable is the liberal-humanist belief that the other is fundamentally knowable. Vercueil is only marginally less opaque for Mrs Curren than was the 'barbarian' girl for the Magistrate, K for the Medical Officer, and Friday for Barton (though the third-person narratives that frame the Medical Officer's bafflement do, tentatively, enter K's inner world). Where Gordimer had reluctantly set bounds to her belief in the hyper-perceptive powers of the artist (Gordimer, 'The Novel and the Nation'), Coetzee's response to the ethical imperative to represent otherness without appropriating it was to provide extensive but limited portrayals while at the same time conveying the portrayed others' resistances to, and

disruptions of, the discourses – colonial, liberal, and novelistic – within which they are constituted. For Mike Marais, these are 'meta-representational strategies of excession' which provide 'a *sense* of that which exceeds the novel's representational protocols', inducing 'an "epiphany" of the infinitude of the other' that has an ethical effect on the reader and, therefore, on history (Marais, 'Writing With Eyes Shut', pp. 49, 56). For others, however, these strategies fixate the reader unhealthily upon difference, ironically re-inscribing the societal exclusions they critique, and neglecting the historical-material conditions that produce those exclusions (see, for example, Parry, 'Speech and Silence'); this criticism of Coetzee thus echoes that of the tradition he rewrites, allegedly heart-changing novels being attacked for inadequate representations of others and inattention to social forces. The '(post)modernist' Coetzee is often also placed in literary-critical opposition to the 'realist' Gordimer, despite Gordimer's experimentation and Coetzee's own creation of a strong realist illusion that generally survives its destabilisation. A perhaps more useful distinction is that Coetzee's rewriting of the liberal novel, influenced by Beckett and Kafka, produces a literature of ethical implication rather than saturation. In this, he bears unlikely comparison with Rooke.

André Brink, many of whose novels are avowedly postmodernist, brings another distinctive voice to the liberal tradition, though he might more properly be placed within the tradition of Afrikaner dissidence (see chapters 21 and 22). Brink's closest to the liberal novel is *A Dry White Season* (1979), in which an idealistic Afrikaner teacher, Ben du Toit, is shaken out of naive complicity by the deaths in police detention of a school janitor and his son, and makes a determinedly courageous attempt to expose the perpetrators. In an exposition of the powerlessness of individuals to challenge the apartheid State by peaceful means, which would find allegorical expression in Coetzee's *Barbarians*, he is harassed and

murdered by the Security Police; but his story survives, supposedly reconstructed by a pulp-fiction writer, to bear testamentary witness.

While irony had been one factor distinguishing writers like Jacobson, Gordimer, and Becker from the sentimental and tragic tone of many of their predecessors, liberal fiction, however excoriating or experimental, remained prone to self-aggrandising melodrama and largely humourless. Satire again provided an alternative form of dissidence, with Tom Sharpe's *Riotous Assembly* (1971) and *Indecent Exposure* (1973) lampooning the police, and Christopher Hope's *A Separate Development* (1980), *Kruger's Alp* (1984), and *The Hottentot Room* (1986) casting their mordant net more widely to expose the cruel and corrupting absurdities of racial stratification; the latter focuses on political exiles in London, while liberals are amongst Hope's catch in, for example, 'Hilton Hits Back' (*'Private Parts' and Other Tales*, 1981). Another tack was taken by Sheila Roberts, whose first two volumes of stories, *Outside Life's Feast* (1975) and *This Time of Year* (1983), explore, with uncompromising realism, the privations and prejudices of South Africa's white working-class. Roberts (whose novels *He's My Brother* (1977) and *The Weekenders* (1981) are also noteworthy) thus charts territory largely beyond the compass of Gordimer and Becker, avoiding the middle-class guilt that pervades white liberal writing.

Meanwhile, Rive produced *Writing Black* (1981), an anecdotal and anti-racialist autobiography, and juxtaposed reminiscence with fictional recreation in *'Buckingham Palace', District Six* (1985), a eulogy to the Cape Town coloured community in which he grew up, and a protest against its removal in the late sixties. The postmodernist turn was reflected in the intertextual and metafictional dimensions of Rive's final novel, *Emergency Continued* (1990), which places characters from *Emergency* in the political turmoil of three Cape Town days in 1985. Dreyer again tries to keep alive the sanctity of an individual response, resisting involvement and documenting as a 'personal history' (p. 5) what he

witnesses, but the marginality that the city's youths required of white pedagogues in Menán du Plessis's *A State of Fear* (1983) and Coetzee's *Age of Iron* proves impossible for the coloured teacher; the pressure to reconsider his liberal principles and embrace active solidarity is made finally irresistible by his son's assassination. Metafiction and the quandary of commitment feature also in John Conyngham's 'Natal Trilogy', *The Arrowing of the Cane* (1986), *The Desecration of the Graves* (1990), and *The Lostness of Alice* (1998). *Arrowing*, in which a 'pragmatic liberal' sugar planter is besieged by unseen arsonists, places the African Farm under the threat of expropriation that was only symbolised in *The Conservationist*, capturing the sense of imminent catastrophe realised in the future histories of *July's People* and *Michael K*. In *Desecration* a novice biographer's research into the Anglo-Boer (or South African) War is interrupted by the more pressing conflict it might illuminate when he encounters a black fugitive; but his decision not to report his sighting and thereby, as he sees it, join 'the struggle', constitutes the most tenuous of solidarities. By this stage, the commitment-quandary had clearly had its day. The real interest of Conyngham's trilogy lies in a broader issue of belonging, the 'lostness' of the unradicalised liberal in time of transition (see Blair, 'Of Lostness and Belonging').

(Post)liberal fiction after apartheid

Conyngham's *Lostness*, in which the protagonist chooses exile, can be read as an expression and/or exploration of 'liberal funk' – liberal fear of post-apartheid marginalisation and violent crime. This vein is epitomised by Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999) (see Marais, 'Very Morbid Phenomena'), in which disgraced academic David Lurie and his lesbian daughter Lucy are attacked on Lucy's smallholding by three black men, who burn David and rape Lucy, leaving

her pregnant. Lucy's agreeing to a polygamous marriage (and the forfeiture of her farm) to her former labourer Petrus, who seems to be connected to the attackers, suggests an acceptance of white marginality, and an abandonment of the liberal ethic of reciprocity, curtailed in Coetzee's earlier fiction, for one of sacrifice; though this sacrificial ethic is explicitly critiqued in the novel, the prospects for reciprocity remain bleak. Similarly bleak are Justin Cartwright's *White Lightning* (2002), in which a middle-aged man returns from England and attempts to transform a rundown farm into a benevolent Arcadia, and Damon Galgut's *The Good Doctor* (2003), in which an idealistic young doctor is posted to a dilapidated and remote rural hospital. Gordimer's *The House Gun* (1998) is also concerned with the ethical inheritance of the 'new' South Africa, but is relatively sanguine about whites' post-apartheid position. Violence, normalised by apartheid, is not, here, an external, retributive threat, but has been internalised by a bisexual man who murders his former gay lover; and the adaptation of his affluent liberal parents to the new dispensation, reassuringly represented by an urbane black lawyer, requires trust rather than abasement.

Gordimer's *The Pickup* (2001) and Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2001) bring different, essentially liberal perspectives to bear on the opening up of South Africa to transnational migration. Gordimer's apartheid-era concern with the shaping of personal relations by inequality is refocused on a cross-cultural affair between a young white woman and an Arab (see Blair, 'The Anxiety of Affluence'), while Mpe reprises the 'Jim' theme to produce a harrowing tale that indicts xenophobia and HIV-prejudice, pleading for tolerance (see Blair, 'The Moral and the Macabre'). Equally discomfiting are K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen Cents* (2000) and *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001), in which a street-child and a student, respectively, struggle to make sense of traumatic pasts, become involved in male prostitution, and seek salvation in personal epiphanies. Duiker, like Abrahams, wants to live in a world 'above and beyond colour', but race repeatedly intrudes, even in moments

of homosexual solidarity, pushing the novels towards the more self-conscious non-racialism of Rive (see Viljoen, 'Non-racialism Remains a Fiction'). Given the emphases on tolerance, non-racialism, and the individual's inner world (including a new explicitness, for liberal fiction, about sexuality), these might be considered works of reconstructed liberalism.[4]

The intense rendering of interior lives, and resistance to formative histories, also characterise Henrietta Rose-Innes's *Shark's Egg* (2000), *The Rock Alphabet* (2004), and *Homing: Stories* (2010). While *Shark's Egg*, which traces the growth of a girl to adulthood, turns away from public themes, in *The Rock Alphabet* the attempt to domesticate two boys of uncertain racial ancestry found wild – and having developed a language of their own – in the mountains, problematises benevolence and suggests that it is possible to live outside identities pre-formed by history.

The re-centring of the personal is apparent, too, in Gordimer's *Get a Life* (2005), and in a turn from the present to the past in a spate of autobiographical writing about childhood under apartheid, including Coetzee's *Boyhood* (1997) (see chapter 35). In fiction, Barbara Trapido's *Frankie and Stankie* (2003) refreshed the liberal *Bildungsroman*, following Dinah de Bondt from a 1940s liberal childhood to her 1964 exile with a dissident lover, and reflecting on the absurdities of apartheid with dark irony, and on those of adolescence and young adulthood with sparkling wit. Shaun Johnson's *The Native Commissioner* (2006), in contrast, is a sombre autobiographical novel in which author-surrogate 'Sam Jameson' reconstructs the story of his father George, an accomplished Africanist whose moderate liberalism is increasingly at odds with the system he serves from the 1930s.[5] Though disheartened by the degeneration of the relatively benign policy of trusteeship into brutal social-engineering, George is unable to embrace 'ultra-liberalism' (p. 186), regarding majority rule as premature. The narrative traces, as tragedy, the consequent disintegration of a man who could neither forgive his own complicity nor extricate himself from a paternalist

mindset that prevented opposition, his depressions and breakdowns culminating, in 1968, in suicide. That George's death comes mere months before the dissolution of the by-then 'ultra-liberal' Liberal Party is indicative of liberalism's broader demise. This novel is not the first discussed here to revisit liberalisms of the past, or to demonstrate the inability of ameliorist wait-and-see liberals to make history happen; but it goes behind and beyond this, providing a sustained, historicised, and personal account of the inevitable defeat by apartheid of even the most informed and tenacious 'decency'. Like Coetzee's *Age of Iron*, *The Native Commissioner* can thus be considered an elegy for liberalism, but its retrospective laying-to-rest of a different cast and vintage of that ideology might more aptly be termed valedictory liberalism, and regarded as an indispensable countersign to the new, reconstructed liberalisms exemplified here by Gordimer, Duiker, Rose-Innes, and Mpe.

Bibliography

Abrahams, L., 'From Shakespeare House to the Laager: The Story of PEN (Johannesburg)', *Sesame*, 3 (Summer 1983-4), 5-19.

Abrahams, P., *Mine Boy*, London, Dorothy Crisp, 1946.

The Path of Thunder, New York, Harper, 1948; Cape Town, David Philip, 1984.

Alexander, P. F., *Alan Paton: A Biography*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994.

Altman, P., *The Law of the Vultures*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1952.

Attwell, D., *J. M. Coetzee: South Africa and the Politics of Writing*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press; Cape Town, David Philip, 1993.

'South African Literature in English', in *The Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature*, ed. F. A. Irele and S. Gikandi, 2 vols., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, II, 504-529.

Barnard, R., 'Tsotsis: On Law, the Outlaw, and the Postcolonial State', *Contemporary Literature*, 49:4 (2008), 541-72.

Becker, J., *The Keep*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1967.

The Union, London, Chatto and Windus, 1971.

The Virgins, London, Victor Gollancz, 1976.

Benson, M., *At the Still Point*, Boston, Gambit, 1969.

Blackburn, D., *Leaven: A Black and White Story*, London, Alston Rivers, 1908.

Blair, P., 'The Anxiety of Affluence: Gordimer's *The Pickup*', *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, 15.1 (April 2003), 178-82.

'The Moral and the Macabre' [review of Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*], *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, 14.1 (April 2002), 163-8.

'Of Lostness and Belonging: Interview with John Conyngham', *Current Writing: Text and*

Reception in Southern Africa, 15:1 (April 2003), 74-90.

'That "Ugly Word": Miscegenation and the Novel in Preapartheid South Africa', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 49:3 (Fall 2003), 581-613.

Brink, A., *A Dry White Season*, London, W. H. Allen, 1979.

Brownlee, F., *Ntsukumbini: Cattle Thief*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1929.

Butler, J., R. Elphick, and D. Welsh, 'Editors' Introduction', in *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa: Its History and Prospects*, ed. J. Butler, R. Elphick, and D. Welsh, Middleton, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press; Cape Town, David Philip, 1987, 3-17.

Cartwright, J., *White Lightning*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 2002.

Chapman, M., *Southern African Literatures*, London, Longman, 1996.

Clingman, S., 'Novel (South Africa)', in *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, ed. E. Benson and L. W. Conolly, 2 vols., London, Routledge, 1994, II, 1148-52.

The Novels of Nadine Gordimer: History from the Inside, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1986.

Coetzee, A. J., T. Couzens, and S. Gray, 'South African Literatures to World War II', in *European-Language Writing in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ed. A. S. Gérard, 2 vols., Budapest, Akadémiai Kaidó, 1986, I, 173-213.

Coetzee, J. M., *Age of Iron*, London, Secker and Warburg, 1990.

Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life, London, Secker and Warburg, 1997.

Disgrace, London, Secker and Warburg, 1999.

Dusklands, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1974.

Foe, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1986.

In the Heart of the Country, London, Secker and Warburg, 1977.

Life and Times of Michael K, London, Secker and Warburg, 1983.

‘South African Liberals: Alan Paton, Helen Suzman’, in *Stranger Shores: Essays 1986-1999*, London, Vintage, 2002, 318-31.

Waiting for the Barbarians, London, Secker and Warburg, 1980.

Conyngham, J., *The Arrowing of the Cane*, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1986.

The Desecration of the Graves, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1990.

The Lostness of Alice, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1998.

Cope, J., *Albino*, London, Heinemann, 1964.

Alley Cat, London, Heinemann, 1973.

The Fair House, London, Heinemann, 1955.

The Golden Oriole, London, Heinemann, 1958.

The Man Who Doubted, London, Heinemann, 1967.

The Rain-Maker, London, Heinemann, 1971.

Selected Stories, Cape Town, David Philip, 1986.

The Tame Ox, London, Heinemann, 1960.

Davenport, R., ‘The Cape Liberal Tradition to 1910’, in *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa: Its History and Prospects*, ed. J. Butler, R. Elphick, and D. Welsh, Middleton, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press; Cape Town, David Philip, 1987, 21-34.

Dhlomo, R. R. R., *An African Tragedy*, Lovedale, Lovedale Press, 1927.

Driver, C. J., *Elegy for a Revolutionary*, London, Faber and Faber, 1969.

Dubow, S., *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919-36*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1989.

Duiker, K. S., *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, Cape Town, Kwela, 2001.

Thirteen Cents, Cape Town, David Philip, 2000.

Du Plessis, M., *A State of Fear*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1983.

Fleischer, T., Editorial, in *New South African Writing*, ed. by T. Fleischer, 5 vols.,

Johannesburg, Purnell, 1964-8, II (1965), v-vii.

Foley, A., '"Considered as a Social Record": A Reassessment of *Cry, The Beloved Country*', *English in Africa*, 25:2 (October 1998), 63-92.

Fugard, A., *Tsotsi*, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1980.

Fugard, S., *The Castaways*, London, Macmillan, 1972.

Galgut, D., *The Good Doctor*, New York, Grove Press, 2003.

Gibbon, P., *Margaret Harding*, London, Methuen, 1911.

Souls in Bondage, Edinburgh, Blackwoods, 1904.

Gordimer, N., *Burger's Daughter*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1979.

The Conservationist, London, Jonathan Cape, 1974.

Get a Life, Cape Town, David Philip, 2005.

A Guest of Honour, New York, Viking, 1970.

The House Gun, Cape Town, David Philip, 1998.

July's People, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1981.

The Late Bourgeois World, London, Cape, 1966.

Life Times: Stories, 1952-2007, London, Bloomsbury, 2010.

'Living in the Interregnum', in *The Essential Gesture: Writing, Politics and Places*, ed. S. Clingman, London, Jonathan Cape, 1988, 261-84.

The Lying Days, London, Victor Gollancz, 1953; Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1994.

My Son's Story, Cape Town, David Philip, 1990.

None to Accompany Me, Cape Town, David Philip, 1994.

'The Novel and the Nation in South Africa', in *African Writers on African Writing*, ed. G. D. Killam, London, Heinemann, 1973, 33-52.

Occasion for Loving, London, Victor Gollancz, 1963.

The Pickup, Cape Town, David Philip, 2001.

Selected Stories, London, Jonathan Cape, 1975.

A Sport of Nature, Cape Town, David Philip, 1987.

A World of Strangers, London, Victor Gollancz, 1958.

Gray, S., *Southern African Literature: An Introduction*, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1979.

'Third World Meets First World: The Theme of "Jim Comes to Joburg" in South African English Fiction', *Kunapipi*, 7:1 (1985), 61-80.

Green, M., 'Difference and Domesticity in Daphne Rooke's *Wizards' Country*', *English in Africa*, 21:1 & 2 (July 1994), 103–139.

Green, R., 'Nadine Gordimer's *A World of Strangers*: Strains in South African Liberalism', *English Studies in Africa*, 22 (1979), 45-54.

Haggard, H. R., *Allan Quatermain*, London, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1887.

Hope, C., *The Hottentot Room*, London, Heinemann, 1986.

Kruger's Alp, London, Heinemann, 1984.

'Private Parts' and Other Tales, Johannesburg, Bateleur, 1981; revised as *Learning to Fly*, London, Minerva, 1990.

A Separate Development, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1980.

Jacobson, D., *'Beggar My Neighbour' and Other Stories*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964.

A Dance in the Sun: A Novel, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1956.

The Evidence of Love, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960.

Inklings: Selected Stories, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

'A Long Way from London' and Other Stories, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958.

The Trap, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1955.

Johnson, R. W. and D. Welsh (eds.), *Ironic Victory: Liberalism in Post-Liberation South Africa*, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1998.

Johnson, S., *The Native Commissioner: A Novel*, Johannesburg, Penguin, 2006, 2007.

Kirkwood, M., 'The Colonizer: A Critique of the English South African Culture Theory', in *Poetry South Africa: Selected Papers from Poetry '74*, ed. P. Wilhelm and J. A. Polley, Cape Town, Ad. Donker, 1976, 102-33.

Marais, M., 'J. M. Coetzee', in *South African Writers*, ed. P. A. Scanlon, Dictionary of Literary Biography, CCXXV, Detroit, Bruccoli Clark Layman, 2000, 131-49.

'Very Morbid Phenomena: "Liberal Funk", the "Lucy-Syndrome" and J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*', *Scrutiny2*, 6:1 (2001), 32-8.

'Writing With Eyes Shut: Ethics, Politics, and the Problem of the Other in the Fictions of J. M. Coetzee', *English in Africa*, 25:1 (May 1998), 43-60.

McDonald, P. D., *The Literature Police: Apartheid Censorship and its Cultural Consequences*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009.

Millin, S. G., *God's Step-Children*, London, Constable, 1924.

Morphet, T., 'Stranger Fictions: Trajectories in the Liberal Novel', *World Literature Today*, 70:1 (Winter 1996), 53-8.

Mpe, Phaswane, *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 2001.

Parker, K., 'Nadine Gordimer and the Pitfalls of Liberalism', in *The South African Novel in English: Essays in Criticism and Society*, ed. K. Parker, London, Macmillan, 1978, 114-30.

'The South African Novel in English', in *The South African Novel in English: Essays in Criticism and Society*, ed. K. Parker, London, Macmillan, 1978, 1-26.

Parry, B., 'Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J. M. Coetzee', in *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995*, ed. D. Attridge and R. Jolly, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, 149-65.

Paton, A., *Ah, But Your Land is Beautiful*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1981.

Apartheid and the Archbishop: The Life and Times of Geoffrey Clayton, Archbishop of Cape Town, Cape Town, David Philip, 1973.

Cry, The Beloved Country: A Story of Comfort in Desolation (1948), Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1988.

Debbie Go Home: Stories, London, Jonathan Cape, 1961; also published as *Tales from a Troubled Land*, New York, Scribners, 1961.

Hofmeyr, London, Oxford University Press, 1964.

Journey Continued: An Autobiography, Cape Town, David Philip, 1988.

Too Late the Phalarope, London, Jonathan Cape, 1953.

Towards the Mountain: An Autobiography, Cape Town, David Philip, 1980.

Peck, R., *A Morbid Fascination: White Prose and Politics in Apartheid South Africa*, Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 1997.

Plaatje, S. T., *Mhudi: An Epic of South African Native Life a Hundred Years Ago*, Lovedale, Lovedale Press, 1930.

Plomer, W., 'The Child of Queen Victoria', in *'The Child of Queen Victoria' and Other Stories*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1933.

Turbott Wolfe, London, Hogarth, 1925.

'Ula Masondo', in *I Speak of Africa*, London, Hogarth, 1927.

Poland, M., *Iron Love*, Johannesburg, Viking, 1999.

Recessional for Grace, Johannesburg, Viking, 2003.

Shades, Johannesburg, Viking, 1993.

Pringle, T., *Narrative of a Residence in South Africa*, London, E. Moxon, 1835; first published jointly with *Poems Illustrative of South Africa* as *African Sketches*, London, E. Moxon, 1834.

Rabkin, D., 'Race and Fiction: *God's Stepchildren* and *Turbott Wolfe*', in *The South African Novel in English: Essays in Criticism and Society*, ed. K. Parker, London, Macmillan, 1978, 77-94.

Ratcliffe, M., 'A South African Radical Exulting in Life's Chaotic Variety' [interview with Gordimer], *The Times* (London), 29 November 1974, 21.

Rich, P. B., *Hope and Despair: English-Speaking Intellectuals and South African Politics, 1896-1976*, New York, St Martin's Press, 1993.

'Liberal Realism in South African Fiction, 1948-66', *English in Africa*, 12:1 (May 1985), 47-81.

'A New South African Liberal Conscience?', *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, 9:2 (1997), 1-20.

White Power and the Liberal Conscience: Racial Segregation and South African Liberalism, 1921-60, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1984.

Rive, R., *Advance, Retreat: Selected Short Stories*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1983.

African Songs, Berlin, Seven Seas, 1963.

'Buckingham Palace', District Six, Cape Town, David Philip, 1986.

Emergency, London, Faber and Faber, 1964.

Emergency Continued, Cape Town, David Philip, 1990; London, Readers International, 1990.

'The Liberal Tradition in South African Literature', *Contrast*, 14:3 (July 1983), 19-31.

Writing Black, Cape Town, David Philip, 1981.

Roberts, S., *He's My Brother: A Novel*, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1977; also published as *Johannesburg Requiem*, New York, Taplinger, 1980.

Outside Life's Feast: Short Stories, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1975.

'This Time of Year' and Other Stories, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1983.

The Weekenders, Johannesburg, Bateleur, 1981.

Robertson, J., *Liberalism in South Africa, 1948-1963*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971.

Rooke, D., *The Greyling*, London, Victor Gollancz, 1962.

Mittee, London, Victor Gollancz, 1951.

Ratoons, London, Victor Gollancz, 1953.

Wizards' Country, London, Victor Gollancz, 1957.

Rose-Innes, H., *Homing: Short Stories*, Cape Town, Umuzi, 2010.

The Rock Alphabet, Cape Town, Kwela, 2004.

Shark's Egg, Cape Town, Kwela, 2000.

Rubin, M., *Sarah Gertrude Millin: A South African Life*, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1977.

Schreiner, O., *Closer Union*, London, Fifield, 1909.

'Eighteen Ninety-Nine', in *Stories, Dreams and Allegories*, London, Fisher and Unwin, 1923.

From Man to Man; or, Perhaps Only …, London, Fisher and Unwin, 1926.

The Story of an African Farm, London, Chapman and Hall, 1883.

Thoughts on South Africa, London, Fisher and Unwin, 1923.

Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland, London, Fisher and Unwin, 1897.

Undine, New York and London, Harper, 1928.

Woman and Labour, London, Fisher and Unwin, 1911.

Scully, W. C., *Daniel Vananda: The Life Story of a Human Being*, Cape Town, Juta, 1923.

Sharpe, T., *Indecent Exposure*, London, Secker and Warburg, 1973.

Riotous Assembly, London, Secker and Warburg, 1971.

Smith, P., *The Beadle*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1926.

The Little Karoo, London, Jonathan Cape, 1925.

Sowden, L., 'The PEN and the Government', in *South African PEN Year Book 1956-1957*,

ed. L. Sowden, Cape Town, Howard B. Timmins, 1957, 7-17.

Stotesbury, J. A., *Apartheid, Liberalism and Romance: A Critical Investigation of the Writing of Joy Packer*, Uppsala, Swedish Science Press, 1996.

Trapido, B., *Frankie and Stankie*, London, Bloomsbury, 2003.

Van den Berghe, P. L., Introduction, in *The Liberal Dilemma in South Africa*, ed. P. L. van den Berghe, London, Croom Helm, 1979, 7-16.

Van der Post, L., *In a Province*, London, Hogarth, 1934.

Van der Vlies, A., *South African Textual Cultures: White, Black, Read All Over*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007.

Vaughan, M., 'Literature and Politics: Currents in South African Writing in the Seventies', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 9:1 (Oct. 1982), 118-38.

Vigne, R., *Liberals Against Apartheid: A History of the Liberal Party of South Africa, 1953-68*, Houndmills, Macmillan; New York, St Martin's Press, 1997.

Viljoen, S., 'Non-racialism Remains a Fiction: Richard Rive's *"Buckingham Palace"*, *District Six* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*', *English Academy Review*, 18:1 (2001), 46-53.

Voss, T., 'The Story of an African Femme', *Reality* (March 1989), 13.

Wade, J., 'Peter Abrahams's *The Path of Thunder*: The Crisis of the Liberal Subject', *English in Africa*, 16:2 (October 1989), 61-75

'*Song of the City* and *Mine Boy*: The "Marxist" Novels of Peter Abrahams', *Research in African Literatures*, 21:3 (Fall 1990), 89-101.

Watson, S., '*Cry, the Beloved Country* and the Failure of the Liberal Vision', *English in Africa*, 9:1 (May 1982), 29-44.

Welsh, D., 'The Liberal Inheritance', in *Ironic Victory: Liberalism in Post-Liberation South Africa*, ed. R. W. Johnson and D. Welsh, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1998,

1-21.

Wentzel, J., *The Liberal Slideaway*, Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1995.

Notes

I would like to thank Jacques Berthoud for the many generous conversations, over a number of years, that helped shape my understanding of texts discussed in this chapter.

[1] Richard Peck suggests a similar three-stage model of liberal fiction: represented by Alan Paton and Laurens van der Post; undermined by Dan Jacobson, Phyllis Altman, and Mary Benson; and superseded by Nadine Gordimer and André Brink (Peck, *A Morbid Fascination*).

[2] For discussion of *Beloved Country*'s early publication history, and the contrast between its reception in South Africa and abroad, see chapter 34.

[3] For discussion of the liberalism of another 'popular' writer, Joy Packer, see Stotesbury, *Apartheid, Liberalism and Romance*.

[4] For discussion of the urbanism of Duiker and Mpe, see chapter 33.

[5] Compare Marguerite Poland's *Recessional for Grace* (2003), in which a postgraduate student attempts to complete a lexicon of metaphorical names for indigenous Nguni cattle begun by an academic in 1946, and finds herself reconstructing his life. Poland has published numerous children's books based on African and Khoisan folklore. Her other fiction for adults includes the historical novels *Shades* (1993) and *Iron Love* (1999).